



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION III  
1650 Arch Street  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029

September 23, 2012

Ms. Laura Hill  
Assistant Field Supervisor  
West Virginia Field Office  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
694 Beverly Pike  
Elkins, WV 26241

**Subject: Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Proposed Issuance of an Incidental Take Permit for the Beech Ridge Energy (BRE) Wind Project Habitat Conservation Plan, Greenbrier and Nicholas Counties, West Virginia (CEQ # 20130268).**

Dear Ms. Hill:

In accordance with Section 102(2) (C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. § 4332(2) (C), Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, 42 U.S.C. § 7609, and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), has reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the above referenced project.

As you are aware the FEIS is for the evaluation of the impacts of implementing the proposed action and three alternatives related to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) proposed issuance of an Endangered Species Act Incidental Take Permit (ITP) for the Beech Ridge Wind Energy Project. The Wind Energy Project consist of up to 100 wind turbines, access roads, transmission and communication equipment storage areas, and control facilities. The proposed 25-year ITP would authorized the incidental take of the Indiana bat and the Virginia big ear bat associated with: 1) the construction of 33 turbines and associated infrastructure, 2) operation of 100 turbines, and 3) eventual decommissioning of the entire project.

On October 12, 2012, EPA provided comments on the Draft EIS for the above referenced project. EPA also rated the project as an EC- 2 (Environmental Concerns, Insufficient Information). The FEIS has provided adequate responses to these comments. EPA anticipates that the USFWS will continue to work with the resource agencies to find additional ways to avoid, minimize and mitigate as the project progresses.

EPA appreciates the USFWS efforts in early coordination throughout the development of the project. If you have any questions regarding our concerns, please feel free to contact me or Mr. Kevin Magerr at (215) 814 5724.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Bar Rudnick', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Barbara Rudnick, PG  
NEPA Team Leader  
Office of Environmental Programs